An Introduction To

Torrensville Preschool Centre

2016
ABOUT US

Torrensville Preschool Centre offers sessional Preschool, Occasional Care and Playgroup Programs to our local community.

Torrensville Preschool Centre was opened in 1993 and replaced the Hatwell Kindergarten on the same site. The building is purpose built and lies within a pleasant tree-filled playground. The Preschool is adjacent to Torrensview Primary School.

We are a learning community that:
• Respects and values the cultural diversity of our children and families.
• Promotes and supports children to engage in a safe, stimulating, play-based learning environment where creativity, imagination and life skills are fostered.
• Works collaboratively to achieve best learning outcomes for all.
• Provides an environment where trust, respect and sharing are valued, supported and promoted.
CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

As Early Childhood Educators we:

- Respect and value the cultural diversity of our children and families.
- Promote and support children to engage in a safe, stimulating, play-based learning environment where creativity, imagination and life skills are fostered.
- Aim to provide a community where children, parents and staff work collaboratively to achieve the best learning outcomes for all.
- Provide an environment where trust, respect and sharing are valued, supported and promoted.
- We believe children learn best when:
  - They feel they belong and are valued for themselves.
  - They have friends, are happy and securely attached to educators and their environment.
  - Processes are in place where staff and parents/families share information and work together to build upon children’s interests, skills, knowledge and experiences.
  - Staff and families support children to engage in learning experiences in a safe, stimulating and challenging play-based environment.
  - They can see their culture reflected in the program.
  - They are involved in the decision making processes.
  - They feel safe and secure and supported to take calculated risks.
  - Staff use a range of teaching strategies including explicit teaching, scaffolding and modelling.

*Developed in consultation with parents, 2012*
SERVICES

Preschool

Children are eligible for a maximum of 15 hours per week of Preschool during the year prior to starting school. Currently at Torrensville, children attend 5 days of Preschool per fortnight. We offer sessions from 9am until 3pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; children attend for 3 days one week, and 2 days the next, giving them 30 hours of Preschool over a fortnight.

The Preschool operates during school terms. The fees are $125 per term and there are 4 terms in the year. Invoices are distributed at the beginning of each term. Parents are welcome to negotiate payment options with the Director as required.

The Preschool is staffed by 2 Early Childhood Teachers and a Certificate 3 Early Childhood Worker.

To be eligible for Preschool, children must have turned 4 prior to 1st May in the year that they start.

Occasional Care

Occasional Care is available to children from the age of 5 months until they start Preschool. We operate 5 sessions for 2-4 year olds on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and two sessions for under 2 year olds on Fridays. The cost is $5 per session or $1.50 with concession. Morning sessions are from 9am until 11.45am and afternoon sessions are from 12.15pm until 3pm. Occasional Care operates during school terms.

Occasional Care is staffed by a Diploma trained Early Childhood Worker and a Certificate 3 Early Childhood Worker.

Playgroup

A parent run playgroup operates on Friday mornings from 9am until 10.30 am, during school terms. At playgroup, parents stay with their child and use the Preschool facilities to engage in a range of play activities.

The cost is $2 per week.
Support Services

The Department for Education and Child Development supports us to provide a number of additional services to children who require them. They include disability support, special education, speech pathology, psychology and bi-lingual support. Please contact the Centre Director should you wish to discuss any of these options.

Child and Youth Health conduct a 4 year old health check at the Preschool each term. Staff will organise this appointment for you.

The School Dental Service offers expert oral health care to children at clinics throughout South Australia. All preschool and school children under 18 years are eligible for this service. Our local clinic is at Cowandilla Primary school, Jenkins Street Cowandilla. Phone for an appointment on 8352 8402.

Children’s Centres for Early Childhood and Parenting provide a range of services for families of children birth to 8 years, including supported playgroups, parenting groups, family support and allied health services.

For more information, speak to the Director or phone Cowandilla Children’s Centre on 8443 7800 or Lockleys Children’s Centre on 8443 5758.
EDUCATORS

Preschool

Director: Tracey McLaren

Teachers: Robyne Bode
          Tania Coorey

Early Childhood Workers: Michelle Baker

Volunteer: Michelle Preiss
(Michelle has been volunteering at Torrensville for 31 years and helps us in many ways, including organising our washing roster. She is a valued member of our Preschool community)

Occasional Care

Early Childhood Worker Level 2: Antonia Arena

Early Childhood Worker Level 1: Diane Napolitano
                            Megan Harris
STARTING PRESCHOOL

How To Enrol

Children are eligible to one year of Preschool in the year before they start School. Children must have turned 4 before May 1st to be eligible.

The first step to enrolling at Torrensville Preschool is to complete a pre-enrolment form. This can be done in person, or the form can be posted or emailed to you. The Preliminary enrolment form gives us contact information for your family and important information about your child that will help us to plan for his/her transition into the Preschool. At this time, you can make an appointment to come and see the Preschool and meet the Director if you wish to.

In mid-term 3 of each year, you will be sent an enrolment package and asked to confirm your enrolment for the following year. At this time you will be given information about transition visits for your child and family, which will be held in term 4.

Your child’s Preschool year formally starts at the beginning of term 1. For the first week of term 1, Preschool will finish at 12.30pm.
CURRICULUM

Educators plan a program using the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF). The EYLF describes 5 outcomes for learning. They are:
1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected and contribute to their world.
3. Children have strong sense of well-being.
4. Children are confident and involved learners.
5. Children are effective communicators.

Using the EYLF, Educators plan a play-based curriculum that allows children to develop their skills and knowledge through active learning experiences. In a play-based program children participate in both child initiated and teacher initiated experiences across a range of learning areas that enable them to develop language, social skills, fine and gross motor skills and creativity. Children are also involved in small and large group times related to the current teaching focus.

Highlights of the program are displayed on our notice board and in the program journal. If you have any questions about the curriculum or your child’s learning, please speak to one of the Educators.

Excursions and Special Events

In our program we celebrate events that are relevant to our community, for example, community events such as Harmony Day or cultural events such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Easter and the Lunar New Year. We are interested to know of events or celebrations that are important to your family, so that we can include them in our program.

Where relevant we may have visitors to the Centre who have something to share that is relevant to our program or we may take the children on an excursion out of the Centre. Traditionally we attend a performance by the Patch Theatre in August each year.

We take the children to the School library each week and we may take them on walks around the local area.

Parent permission is required for excursions.
We believe that each child is unique and we try to get to know each child on a personal level as quickly as possible. This helps us to understand their strengths and interests and to build on this within the program. Part of this process is a parent interview, where parents make a time to talk with a teacher about their child both at home and at Preschool.

During your child’s time at Preschool, Educators collate a folder of your child’s work and photographs of them involved in the program. We also include information about the curriculum each term.

A Statement of Learning is written for each child at the end of the year. The Statement details information about their learning at Preschool, their strengths and interests as well as areas the Educators have been supporting. With your permission a copy is forwarded to your child’s School and a copy is included in their folder for your family to keep.
COSTS

The Centre receives Government funding to cover salaries and some running costs. We rely on parent fees and fundraising to cover the rest.

Preschool fees are currently $135 per term. Invoices are distributed at the beginning of each term and payment can be made by cash, cheques or EFT. We do not have credit card facilities. Child Care Benefit and Concession Cards do not apply to Preschool fees.

Families who have difficulty paying should speak to the Director in confidence. Children will not be excluded from Preschool because of non-payment of fees.

There may from time to time be additional voluntary costs for excursions, special events or Preschool photos.

The Governing Council will organise fundraising events throughout the year. Your support is appreciated.
POLICIES

The Centre has a range of required Policies and this information is available to parents in the Policy Folder at the Centre and on our website.

Policies in the folder include:
- Nutrition Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements.
- Sun Protection.
- Interactions with Children (site behaviour code).
- Enrolment and Orientation Information.
- Payment of Fees.
- Parent Complaint Procedure.

The following required Polices apply to the whole of our Department, and are available at www.decd.sa.gov.au:
- Water Safety.
- Emergency and Evacuation.
- Delivery and Collection of Children.
- Excursions.
- Child Safe Environment.
- Code of Conduct.
- Governance and Management of the Service.
- Administration of First Aid.
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness.
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases.
- Dealing with Medical Conditions.
- Determining a Responsible Person Present.
- Participation of Volunteers and Students.
- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations.

We have included an abbreviated version of relevant policies and procedures in this booklet for your information.

Sun Safe

Children need to wear a broad brimmed or legionnaires hat to play outside during terms 1 and 4. We do have some spare hats for children to use in emergencies; children will not be able to play outside in terms 1 and 4 without a suitable hat. Please make sure the hat is clearly named.

Please apply sunscreen to your child’s exposed skin each morning. In terms 1 and 4 staff will reapply sunscreen to children at lunchtime.
Hot Weather

On days of extreme heat, the Centre will remain open. The Centre is air-conditioned and staff will ensure that children remain hydrated and safe in these conditions. Our outside play area is well shaded and staff will conduct a risk assessment regarding outside play in adverse weather conditions and play options will be modified accordingly.

You are welcome to collect your child early if you feel that they could become distressed in the heat.

Anaphylaxis and Allergies

From time to time we have children in the Centre with sensitivities to foods and other substances ranging from mild to life-threatening. Those children need to have an Allergy or Anaphylaxis Plan completed by their doctor and this is displayed in the Preschool Kitchen.

Centre practices may be altered from time to time to reflect the health needs of particular children.

This information will be taken into account when planning Preschool activities, such as cooking. We ask that you do not bring food to share without first consulting with staff.

Because of the prevalence of nut allergies in the community, we are a nut-aware Centre. Children must not bring nuts or nut-based products in their snacks or lunches.

Health Needs

Should your child have a chronic health condition, such as asthma, please indicate this on your enrolment form and speak to the Director.

Children with asthma will need a current Asthma Plan, completed by their doctor. Other conditions may require a Health and/or Medication Plan.

Medications (including over the counter medications) cannot be administered to children at Preschool without a Medication Plan completed by a doctor.
Personal Care

Some children begin Preschool before they are fully toilet trained. If this is the case for your child, please talk to an Educator so that we can support you in the process.

In general, we prefer that children do not wear nappies or pull-ups to Preschool, but if you feel that it is better that they do, please speak to an Educator. You will need to supply nappies or pull-ups for your child, we do not supply them.

The Centre has changing and bathing facilities available should children have accidents. Please send a set of spare clothes with your child’s bag ‘just in case’.

Illness

Should children develop a contagious condition we ask that you inform the Centre as soon as possible. We are required to inform other parents of this, which we do via out parent notice board.

Common illnesses that we need to know about include chickenpox, conjunctivitis, hand, foot and mouth disease, cold sores, school sores, measles, mumps, ringworm, rubella, salmonella and whooping cough.

Children with contagious illnesses (e.g. colds, flu, gastric illness, bronchitis and the conditions listed above) should be excluded from Preschool until they are no longer contagious. Educators or your doctor can tell you when your child can return to Preschool.

If your child is ill, please do not send them to Preschool, we do not have the facilities or staffing to care for sick children. Should your child become ill at Preschool, you or your nominated emergency contact will be called to collect your child.

First Aid

All Educators are trained in first aid, including anaphylaxis and CPR. All minor injuries are treated by Educators, recorded and reported to parents. In the event of a more serious injury staff will contact parents, so that you can consult your doctor.

In the case of an emergency an ambulance will be called and the child will be taken to the Women’s and Children’s Hospital accompanied by an Educator. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.
Staying Safe

Each day your child attends Preschool, please sign your child in and out using the sign in sheets available on the veranda. As staff “duty of care” does not start until 9am, we must ask that you do not leave your child until then.

Should you arrive after the session has begun, please speak to a staff member, so that we know that your child has arrived.

If you need to pick up your child early, you need to tell a staff member that you are taking your child and remember to sign out.

Early drop off is available from 8.30am by prior arrangement. A $5 per day fee applies.

Please be prompt when collecting children at the end of the day. The finishing time is 3pm. Should someone other than the usual carers be collecting your child, please write this in the diary located next to the sign in sheet. If there are any last minute changes to pick up arrangements, please phone the Centre.

We understand that there may be times when you are running late – please phone us if you can, as children can become distressed if parents are late. Regular late pick-ups may incur a late fee.

Please be aware of other children when opening gates and ensure that only the children in your care are exiting with you.

Your child will gain most from their Preschool experience if their attendance is regular. If your child is absent for any reason, please give us a call to let us know. We have an answering machine, so you can call and leave a message at any time.

Please do not park in the disabled car park unless you have a disability parking permit or in the no parking space in front of the Preschool access gates.

Birthdays

We celebrate children’s Birthdays by singing happy birthday and blowing out candles on a pretend cake. Please do not bring a birthday cake or other treats to share, as we do not want other families to feel pressured to do likewise.
Permissions

On your enrolment form you are asked to give a number of permissions. They are:

- **Photo Permission:** This permission allows us to photograph your child during activities, to display around the Centre, to use in newsletters and to put in their folders. We will not use these photographs for any other purpose (i.e. website) without a DECD Talent release form being signed by you.

- **Short Local Walks Permission:** This permission allows us to take your child on occasional local walks (i.e. around the block) or more frequently to Torrensville Primary School. We visit the school often, mostly to use the library and the oval.

Should we plan a longer excursions, a separate consent form will be required from you. We will ask for volunteer parents to assist us on excursions. It is a requirement that staff undertake a risk assessment when planning for excursions.

Parent Concerns

The relationship between Educators and families is fundamental to the quality of care and education that children receive. Open communication in a respectful way ensures the best outcome for you, your child and the Preschool.

Should you have a concern, you should, in the first instance raise it with the Educator concerned and/or the Centre Director. If you have a concern that will take more time, please make an appointment to discuss your issue with the Director.

If you are not satisfied that your concern has been resolved by the Preschool, you can direct your concern to the Department for Education and Child Development Education Complaint Unit. They can be contacted by email at DECDEducationComplaint@sa.gov.au or by phone on 1800 677 435.

Positive Behaviour Policy

We believe that children have the right to play in a safe and supportive environment. We encourage children to learn how to regulate their own behaviour which enables them to work co-operatively and collaboratively as members of a group.
Our aim is for children to develop:

- Positive social skills.
- An understanding of their own and others’ behaviours.
- The ability to express feelings confidently.
- Skills to handle conflict in an appropriate manner.
- The ability to be responsible for their actions.
- Respect and care for others, property and the environment.
- The ability to make choices and decisions about things that impact on them.

We will assist children to develop these abilities by:

- Explicitly teaching and modelling appropriate behaviours.
- Provide consistency in our routines, rules and expectations.
- Focus on the behaviour and not the child.
- Help children understand the consequences of their behaviour.

Strategies we will use will include:

- Restorative practices – What happened? Who has been hurt or what went wrong? What do we need to do to make things better?
- STOP, THINK, DO – Stop what you are doing, think about what is happening and what needs to be done, then do it.
- Distracting or redirecting to another activity.

Each situation is different; Educators will make a judgement as to the most appropriate approach, according to our knowledge of the child and their developmental level.

**Transition to School**

Enrolment at the School of your choice is the responsibility of parents (including enrolment to Torrensville Primary). We recommend that you enrol your child at Primary School as soon as possible.

Your School will contact you to organise transition visits in term 4. Often schools will have a teacher visit the Preschool prior to the visits, to meet the child and to talk to Preschool Educators.

Educators from the Preschool will attend some of the transition visits to Torrensville Primary School with the children who are enrolled there. With your permission, a copy of your child’s Statement of Learning will be forwarded to your child’s next teacher.
Useful Links

The following links will provide you with additional information that you might find useful:

THE PRESCHOOL DAY

How to Prepare Your Child for Preschool

There are many ways that you, as parents, can support your child’s transition to Preschool. Each child will handle this phase differently, depending on their personality and previous experiences. Most will make the transition easily, but for some it may take a little longer. Educators will work with you through this process; please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have concerns about your child.

Some things you can do include:

• Make sure your child knows that he/she will soon be going to Preschool.
• Talk positively about Preschool.
• Go past the Preschool regularly and point out the Preschool building, walk up and have a look through the fence.
• As much as possible, make sure your child can manage toileting on their own.
• Practice opening and closing their bag and lunch box. You could have a practice ‘snack’ and ‘lunch’ at home, to help them learn independence with these tasks.
• Practice putting on and taking off their shoes.
• Help them to learn to recognise their own name, especially where it is written on their belongings.
• Make sure that they know that they can find their spare clothes in their bag in case of a toilet accident.

What to do for the first day:

• Talk to your child about what is likely to happen during the day.
• Talk about drink, snack, and lunch times. Make sure they know what their snack box, lunchbox and drink bottle look like.
• Make sure your child knows where the toilet is, how to get a drink, where their bag and belongings are kept. Have them hang their own bag up.
• Try to help your child find a friend in the Preschool.
• Make sure your child knows who will pick them up.
• Don’t be late for pick-up, especially in the first couple of weeks.

The Preschool Day

On arrival, help your child to put his/her lunch in the tub and hang up their bag. Sign in, check the noticeboard and notice pocket. You may wish to look at the photos, program journal and displays with your child. If you arrive before 9am you need to stay with your child on the veranda or in the playground.
At 9am the doors are opened and you can then help your child to choose an activity. You are welcome to stay as long as you wish with your child, just remember to say goodbye before you leave. This is also a good time to speak to an Educator should you need to.

Children are engaged in inside and outside activities until around 9.30am. They are then called to the mat for an activity. On some days we divide into small groups for a literacy or numeracy activity. On Wednesdays we visit the library at the School. At the conclusion of mat time we wash hands and eat snacks on the mat, then resume our inside or outside activities. Children mostly choose where they would like to play during this time.

At 11.45am the children are again called to the mat. We have another whole group activity, the children then wash hands and eat lunch sitting at tables. After eating we have a short relaxation time, which may include yoga, a story or an e-book shown on the whiteboard, before children resume their inside or outside play.

At 2.30pm we pack up all activities, children come back to the mat at 2.45pm for a singing or group game, before being dismissed individually to parents or carers at 3pm.

Please make sure you sign out before you leave and that you have all belongings. Ask your child if he/she have any work that they would like to take home.

**Leaving Your Child**

You are welcome to stay with your child until they are settled for the day. When it is time to go, be sure to say goodbye. It is important that you never go without saying goodbye, as your child may become distressed.

From time to time some children become upset when you leave. If you are having difficulty with separation and you are unsure, please speak to a staff member.

Children who are upset and clinging to their parents most often settle very quickly when they are left, as they are able to be distracted from being upset and engage in an activity. If your child does not settle once you leave, staff will call you.
WHAT TO BRING

Developing confidence and independence, especially with self-care is very important for children’s feeling of well-being and there are many ways that we can help children to do this. Please make sure all belongings are clearly named, preferably on the outside. Not only does this help us all to keep track of belongings, it helps us to help your child to be independent in caring for their things and to recognise their name.

We have a lost property box, please check it regularly.

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable and that they can manage themselves. Although we provide smocks for messy activities, they may still get dirty, so do not send them in their best clothes. Children should wear shoes that allow them to run and climb safely – thongs/flip flops and smooth soled shoes are not suitable.

WE ARE A NUT-AWARE CENTRE – NO NUTS OR NUT-BASED FOODS

Children need to bring these items to Preschool each day:
1. Backpack/bag (named on the outside).
2. Change of clothes.
3. Drink bottle – WATER ONLY.
4. Snack – to stay in the bag.
5. Lunch – in a separate insulated pack. Put it into the large tub on arrival and it will be stored inside until lunch time.
6. Hat – named. We have a no hat, no play policy in terms 1 and 4.

Morning Snack

Children eat their snack all together on the mat. We encourage healthy eating and would prefer if children ate only fruit or vegetables for snack.

Please do not send yoghurt or messy foods as they can easily be spilt on the carpet.

Snacks are kept in your child’s backpack.
**Lunch**

We do not have the facilities to refrigerate lunches, so please pack them in an insulated bag with an icepack.

Children may bring any healthy food that they can manage themselves and does not have to be heated up. We suggest a sandwich, wrap, salad, roti or rice, with a piece of fruit or cheese, dip and savoury biscuits. Children sit at tables to eat lunch, so it is ok to send yoghurt. Please no sweets, chips or sugary snacks.

Please help your child to put their lunch in the tubs provided on arrival. The tubs are stored inside until lunch time.

**Drinks**

Please send a drink bottle with water only. We also supply water and clean cups for children should they need to use them.

Water bottles are kept in children’s backpacks.

**Healthy Eating**

Not sure what to pack in the lunchbox? Have a look at the following websites for some ideas:

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The Governing Council

The Governing Council is a group of interested parents responsible for advising the Director on the running of the Preschool including financial management, physical resources, fundraising and policy.

Whilst this may sound like an onerous task, it is in fact an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The Governing Council meet twice per term, at a time determined by the group. It’s a great opportunity to hear about the Preschool and to get involved.

An Annual General Meeting is held each February and all parents are invited to attend.

Communication

Each child has a notice pocket, located either side of the main door, please check it regularly. That is where we put regular newsletters, curriculum information and notices of interest for you to take home.

Newsletters are published several times per term and contain information about the activities of the Preschool and curriculum highlights.

Each child has a folder containing photographs and work samples that builds over the course of the year. Parents are invited to have a look at the folder at any time.

The program journal, located just inside the door, documents both our planning and reflections of learning. Please take the time to look at this regularly. Similarly, photographs and children’s work are displayed around the Preschool.

During term 1 we will invite parents to book an interview with one of the Educators. At the interview you can share information about your child, give us any feedback and discuss your child’s transition to Preschool.

You are, of course, welcome to make an appointment at any time during the year should you wish to discuss your child’s progress.
Should any of the details on your child’s enrolment form change during the year, please update them with us immediately, particularly addresses, phone number, emergency contacts, health and custody details.

**Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the Preschool in a range of ways. You may like to be on the Governing Council or to help with fundraising, gardening or maintenance of the Centre. You may be willing to share your culture or skills with us; tell us if you play an instrument, paint, draw, love to cook or garden, or if you can help us celebrate a special event.

We rely on parent help to take washing home and to take bottles and cans to the recycling centre.

Keep an eye on the parent notice board; we often ask for help with specific tasks, you or someone in your family might be able to help.

**Useful Things To Bring From Home**

Should our ‘making table’ need replenishing, we will ask families to bring along items i.e. Paper, cardboard, magazines, egg cartons, buttons, wool, string, boxes, ice-cream containers, etc.

Children enjoy bringing things from home to put on our interest table. Please encourage your child to share their interests with us, but be aware that we cannot take responsibility for items brought from home.

Have you been on a special outing or holiday? Encourage your child to share their experience with us. They might like to bring some photographs or a drawing of where they have been and what they have done.
Torrensville Preschool Centre

Address: 93 Ashley Street, Torrensville SA 5031
Phone: (08) 8443 7492
E-Mail: director@torrensvillepre.sa.edu.au

South Australia State School Terms

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